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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KHARTOUM 001092

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DEPARTMENT FOR AF A/S FRAZER AND AF/SPG
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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [UN](#) [AU](#) [SU](#) [ER](#)
SUBJECT: DARFUR: SE NATSIOS DISCUSSES POLITICAL PROCESS
WITH UN, EU ENVOYS

KHARTOUM 00001092 001.2 OF 002

Classified By: CDA A. Fernandez, Reason: Sections 1.4 (b) and (d)

11. (C) Summary: SE Natsios met with UN Envoy Jan Eliasson and EU Envoy Torben Brylle in Khartoum on July 12 to discuss the Darfur political process. Eliasson planned to use the upcoming Tripoli summit to declare an end to the first, "convergence" phase of the UN/AU roadmap and to launch the second, "pre-negotiations" phase. This second phase would include a July 21 meeting of Darfur rebel political leaders in Tanzania, though the potential for a successful outcome remains in doubt due to the ongoing rift between the Darfur rebels' political and military wings. The Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) initiative remained stalled, with SE Natsios, Eliasson, and Brylle questioning whether it would be positive for Darfur and for the SPLM itself. Eliasson solicited ideas for the inclusion of civil society in the peace process. End summary.

Tripoli: The End of Convergence

12. (C) Meeting with SE Natsios and EU Special Representative for Sudan Torben Brylle on July 12, the UN Secretary General's Special Envoy for Darfur Jan Eliasson explained that the UN and AU planned to call an end to the first step of their roadmap, the "convergence" phase, during the upcoming Tripoli summit. SE Natsios suggested that the UN/AU send a clear and public message that convergence meant the cessation of all initiatives outside the UN/AU process, "not just coordination or blending with the UN/AU." Eliasson acknowledged that the UN/AU process needed more discipline and underlined the importance of international support for stricter messages. He added that several Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA) non-signatory leaders, including Ahmed Diraige, Abdullah Yehia, Osman Bushra, and Ahmed Abdulshafi would be in Tripoli for possible "side consultations" with the delegations.

13. (C) Following the Tripoli summit, the UN/AU would expect that international actors focus on preparing for negotiations, the second phase of the roadmap. Eliasson indicated that the UN/AU would follow the rough outline of the USG-backed "shuttle diplomacy" approach during this phase by meeting with the parties and discussing their positions. He said that the UN/AU would decide on a venue for the negotiating phase and suggested Arusha, Tanzania as a possibility. SE Natsios supported this choice. (Note:

Though Eliasson mentioned "shuttle diplomacy" specifically, it remains unclear whether he views this approach as an assessment of the parties' positions or as a mediation tool to narrow differences between the parties on specific issues. End note.)

UN Proposes Meeting of SLM Political Leaders

¶4. (C) The UN/AU intend to organize a conference of five to seven key rebel political leaders in Arusha, Tanzania on July 21, according to Eliasson. He hoped the meeting would result in more coherent positions among the rebels, including Abdulwahid al-Nur, Ahmed Abdulshafi, Ahmed Diraige, Abdullah Yehia, Khamis Abdullah, and Sharif Harir. He said that "the majority of non-signatories" had committed to attend but that Abdulwahid had not yet confirmed. (Note: Pekka Haavisto, Eliasson's senior advisor, and Sam Ibok, head of AU DPA implementation, are scheduled to meet with Abdulwahid on July 13 in Paris to discuss the Arusha meeting. End note.) "We need a lobbying group on our side to condemn obstruction," said SE Natsios. Eliasson agreed that non-cooperation with the UN/AU process should have a price but questioned how to do so.

¶5. (C) SE Natsios asked Eliasson how the UN and AU planned to repair the rift between the rebel political leaders and the commanders in the field. Eliasson offered no response and asked for suggestions. A Khartoum-based staff member of Brylle's emphasized that the UN/AU could not hold separate meetings between Darfur political and military leaders and predicted that the Arusha meeting would last much longer than the two days anticipated by the UN. Eliasson then questioned rhetorically whether the Arusha meeting risked failure. Poloff said that the issue was a matter of sequencing. The rift between the political leadership and the field should be repaired first, then the UN/AU could lead discussions among

KHARTOUM 00001092 002.2 OF 002

the non-signatories on their positions. He cautioned that the UN/AU not view the different groups of political leaders and the field commanders as homogenous. All had differing levels of political and military clout.

SPLM Conference: To Be or Not to Be

¶6. (C) SE Natsios related his recent discussion with First Vice President Salva Kiir and other leaders of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement's (SPLM) regarding their initiative on Darfur. The SPLM looked to their long struggle against Northern Sudanese governments, and Kiir had explained that it took 12 years to unify the SPLM in preparation for peace negotiations. SE Natsios suggested that the SPLM was looking at a longer time frame than the international community based on this experience. However, Kiir had offered to cancel the SPLM initiative, if asked, if it was not helpful to the UN/AU. SE Natsios said that he would support Eliasson if he decided to ask the SPLM to stand down.

¶7. (C) Eliasson initially responded that he did not want to stop the SPLM as their involvement in Darfur was "part of their national political life." Instead, he wanted the SPLM to join forces with the UN/AU, as well as Eritrea, to prepare the non-signatories for negotiations. Eliasson's position shifted somewhat after Brylle reported that a meeting on July 12 with Minister of Cabinet Affairs Deng Alor had convinced him that the SPLM initiative had "no particular purpose" beyond the campaign for the 2009 elections. He added that the NCP was "laughing at" the SPLM's failed attempts to organize a Darfur conference in Southern Sudan. CDA Fernandez concurred. SE Natsios stressed that a connection between the campaign and the Darfur political process "would tarnish it." Eliasson then questioned whether asking the SPLM

to stop their initiative was "reverse face-saving" and better for both the SPLM and the Darfur political process in the long term.

Civil Society: Consultations...Plus

¶8. (C) The UN was considering a variety of options for including civil society in the political process. While asserting that civil society activists could not be direct participants in negotiations, Eliasson said that consultations alone were insufficient. He was considering a supporting concept called "consultations plus" or "negotiations minus" but asked for suggestions on how to operationalize this structure to move the political process forward. SE Natsios said that the bottom line was who would sign the final agreement. The DPA had failed because traditional leaders, civil society, and Arab groups were not included in the agreement. CDA Fernandez noted that the IDP camps were organizing politically, which should also be taken into account. Brylle suggested that the UN/AU consider "re-baptizing" the Darfur Darfur Dialogue and Consultation (DDDC), stipulated in the DPA, under the new political process.

¶9. (U) SE Natsios' staff cleared this message.

¶10. (U) Tripoli minimize considered.
FERNANDEZ